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THE PROGRESS OF INDUS- TRIAL EDUCATION : : : :

AN ADDRESS

BEFORE THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK ON
WEDNESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 30, 1891, AT THE OPENING
OF THE SIXTIETH EXHIBITION, AT THE EXHIBITION
BUILDING, ON THIRD AVENUE, BETWEEN
63RD AND 64TH STREETS

BY

GENERAL STEWART L. WOODFORD



PRINTED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
BOARD OF MANAGERS

NEW YORK

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE

1891

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A CONDENSED HISTORY
OF THE
AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
AND ITS
EXHIBITIONS

A FEW enterprising citizens in the year 1828 met in a small room in Tammany Hall and organized the American Institute, and in 1829 a charter was granted by the Legislature of the State of New York, under the title of the "American Institute of the City of New York."

Its objects are to encourage and promote domestic industry in this State, and the United States, in Agriculture, Commerce, Manufactures, and the Arts, and any improvements made therein, by bestowing rewards and other benefits on those who shall make such improvements, or excel in any of the said branches.

The first trustees and officers were William Few, President ; John Mason, First Vice-President ; Curtis Bolton, Second Vice-President ; Peter H. Schenck, Third Vice-President ; Enos Baldwin, Fourth Vice-President ; Anson Hayden, Fifth Vice-President, and John B. Yates and John A. Sidell, Secretaries.

Mr. THADDEUS B. WAKEMAN was very prominent as one of its founders, in fact, might be styled its father, and was its Corresponding Secretary for eighteen years. He died in 1848. The Institute, to mark its appreciation of his services, erected a monument to his memory in Greenwood Cemetery.

The HON. HENRY MEIGS was always active in the affairs of the Institute ; he was its Recording Secretary for seventeen years, and delivered a number of addresses at the Fairs.

One of the principal means to accomplish its objects was the holding of Exhibitions, or as they were then called, Annual Fairs,

in which Inventors, Manufacturers and others, could exhibit their various productions.

The first Fair was held in 1828 in Masonic Hall, then standing on Broadway, nearly opposite the New York Hospital, at the head of Pearl Street, and the Executive Committee having charge of the Fair was composed of Joseph Blunt, H. M. Solomon, Thomas S. Wells, Clarkson Crolus, James Benedict and Oliver D. Cook, Jr. This Exhibition was very successful, and after holding six Fairs there, it was found necessary to secure more ample accommodations. After examining various locations, Niblo's Garden was selected for its seventh Fair, notwithstanding great doubts were expressed as to its accessibility, it being deemed by many too far out of town. The Fair was, however, well patronized that year, and the Exhibitions became very popular until the place was consumed by fire in 1846.

Castle Garden, on the Battery, then a fashionable resort for our citizens, was next selected, and the Fairs were held there every Fall until 1853.

The Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations was opened in the Crystal Palace in 1854, on Reservoir Square, in Sixth Avenue, between Fortieth and Forty-second Streets. After its close the American Institute procured it for holding its Exhibitions, which were held there in 1855, '56, '57 and '58, when it was destroyed by fire on the afternoon of October 5th, 1858, with all its contents. This was a severe loss to the American Institute, and was thought by some to be its death blow. Notwithstanding this disaster, the managers held an Exhibition the next year in Palace Garden, in Fourteenth Street, on the same lots on which now stands the Armory of the Twenty-second Regiment. The Institute, at great expense, made many improvements in that building, and held Fairs in it for several years.

In 1863, the Exhibition was held in the Academy of Music, Fourteenth Street and Irving Place.

In 1869, the Institute secured the large structure on Third Avenue, between Sixty-third and Sixty-fourth Streets. This building had been erected for a Skating Rink; to this the Institute have added three large buildings, the whole covering forty city building lots, extending from Third to Second Avenues.

During the Exhibitions, addresses were delivered by prominent citizens of the United States, the anniversary address during the

third annual Fair by the HON. EDWARD EVERETT, of Boston, Mass., was a masterpiece of oratory. It was afterwards published and passed through a second edition.

John Mason succeeded Mr. Few as President, and James Tallmadge followed Mr. Mason, holding place until 1846, when Mahlon Dickerson became President, holding office for two years, when Gen. Tallmadge was again elected, and served until '53, dying while in office.

Among the Presidents of the Institute have been Robert L. Pell, James Renwick, Gen. William Hall, Horace Greeley, William B. Ogden, Prof. F. A. P. Barnard, Nathan C. Ely, Cyrus H. Loutrel, Thomas Rutter, and J. Trumbull Smith, who was elected in '89, and is still in office.

Many modest men, who would have remained in obscurity, have made fortunes in having their skill and ingenuity brought prominently before the public by the great facilities afforded them by the American Institute.

The Exhibitions are held under the direction of a Board of Managers, elected annually by the members.

The articles on exhibition are classified under seven departments, which are again divided into seven groups. The classifications are as follows :

1. *Department of Fine Arts and Education.*
2. *Department of the Dwelling.*
3. *Department of Dress and Handicraft.*
4. *Department of Chemistry and Mineralogy.*
5. *Department of Engines and Machinery.*
6. *Department of Intercommunication.*
7. *Department of Agriculture and Horticulture.*

In connection with the Fairs, the American Institute has held eighteen Exhibitions of Live Stock from 1838 to 1859, the Exhibitions of 1857 and 1858 were confined to Fat Cattle.

These Exhibitions were held for some years on the ground on which the Fifth Avenue Hotel now stands; it was then out of town. On this ground stood a famed hostelry, known as Madison Cottage, kept by CORPORAL THOMPSON; this was the stopping place for the Broadway stages.

The Cattle Shows were also held on Hamilton Square, and on Hamilton Park, in Third Avenue.

In addition to its valuable Scientific Library, there are three sections, viz. :

1st. The Farmers' Club, under the direction of the Committee on Agriculture, which meets the first Tuesday of each month at 2 o'clock, P. M., at its rooms Nos. 111-115 West Thirty-eighth Street.

2d. The Polytechnic, under the direction of the Committee on Manufactures and Machinery, which discusses Scientific Subjects, the examination of New Inventions, etc.; it meets at the same place on the third Thursday of each month, at 8 o'clock, P. M.

3d. The Photographic Section, under the direction of the Committee on Chemistry and Optics, which discusses all matters in relation to Photography and the action of light—this Section meets at the same place on the first Tuesday of each month, at 8 o'clock, P. M.

All these meetings are open to the public.

The present number of members is about two thousand.

One of the notable things that the Institute feels proud of, is the action it took in procuring the passage of the Act creating the Natural History of the State of New York. After two or three years of persistent petitioning, the law was passed. The publication of these reports occupy twenty-two 4to volumes, and is a proud monument of the State.

The Institute is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of thirteen members, of which the President, two Vice-Presidents, and two members are retired and elected annually.

The Institute is now holding its Sixtieth Annual Exhibition.

CHAS. WAGER HULL is the General Superintendent, and JOHN W. CHAMBERS is the Secretary of the Board of Managers, a position he has filled for fifty-seven years.

THE
AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

INCORPORATED 1829.

"FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENCOURAGING AND PROMOTING DOMESTIC INDUSTRY IN THIS
STATE AND THE UNITED STATES, IN AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE,
MANUFACTURES AND THE ARTS."

OFFICES AND LIBRARY:
111-115 WEST 38TH STREET.

EXHIBITION BUILDINGS:
2D AND 3D AVES., BET. 63D AND 64TH STS.

NEW YORK, October 10, 1891.

General STEWART L. WOODFORD,

DEAR SIR :

AT a meeting of the Board of Managers of the Sixtieth Annual Fair of the American Institute, held on the 6th inst., the following resolution offered by Judge R. H. Shannon was unanimously adopted :

Resolved : " That the thanks of this Board be tendered to General Stewart L. Woodford for the able, eloquent and instructive address delivered by him at the opening of the Sixtieth Annual Fair on the 30th of September, and request him to furnish a copy of same for publication."

I take great pleasure in conveying the foregoing to you.

Yours very respectfully,

JOHN W. CHAMBERS, Secretary.

NEW YORK, October 15, 1891.

MR. JOHN W. CHAMBERS, *Secretary American Institute*,
3d Avenue, near 63d St., City.

MY DEAR SIR :

Let me thank you for your favor of October 10th. With this I return revised copy of my remarks at the opening of your Institute Fair.

Cordially thanking your Board for the privilege of being with you on that evening, I am,

Truly yours,

STEWART L. WOODFORD.

THE PROGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN; LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

TO speak against the hammer of the carpenter, the buzz of the engine, and the pleasant chatter of the young ladies and their numerous attendants, will be a difficult task, and so I shall be very brief.

During the last few weeks I have felt constrained, under the necessities of a political canvass, to say some rather unkind things about Tammany Hall, and so it is exceedingly pleasant this night to bear this tribute to Tammany Hall: that in 1828, sixty-three years ago, the American Institute was organized by a few public-spirited citizens, in one of the upper rooms of Tammany Hall. And I am willing to admit, that for once in her history, Tammany Hall did a thoroughly good thing. (Applause.) The objects of the American Institute, as I understand them, are to encourage American inventions, to educate American mechanics in the mechanical arts, and, generally, to assist in all practical ways in the development of American resources and American possibilities.

And frankly, my friends, I like the name of AMERICAN Institute. (Applause.) I like it because it speaks in one word all the meaning of American progress and American effort. What this Institute has done in the way of development, in invention, in ministering to mechanical education, can hardly be justly estimated and sufficiently honored. (Applause.)

This was one of the first fairs ever established in this country. Now we have them in every town, we have them in every county, we have them in every state. But the American Institute Fair that was organized sixty years ago, in the city of New York, was logically the seed corn of the great Columbian Exposition that is to be held in Chicago next year, and to the founders of this Institute should the credit and the honor this day be given. (Applause.)

The educational work that has been done by this American Institute was early seen by one of the greatest of our American thinkers, and there was no work that was attempted in the City or State of New York, that so commended itself to the warm heart and large brain of that pioneer of American development, Horace Greeley, as did the work of the American Institute and the American Institute Fair. (Applause.)

When your Institute was organized and the first of your fairs was held, American industrial or mechanical education was almost entirely confined within the several crafts, to the education that the master machanic could give to his apprentices and his men. To-day there are industrial schools with trained professors, with scientific education, established in every one of the great cities of the American Union. Education, higher education, has ceased to be scholastic and has become practical. In 1828, almost every man who went to Harvard, to Columbia, or to Yale, might talk Latin and Greek to you, but could not drive a nail or use a hammer without mashing his thumb. (Laughter.) To-day in the highest Universities of the country we have engineering schools, mechanical schools and electrical schools. We have the great Massachusetts School of Technology at Boston; we have the Stevens' Institute, across the river in Hoboken; we have the great Sheffield School in Yale University; we have the School of Mines in Columbia College; we have the Sibley College at Cornell University. To-day the teachers of the nation and the best trained intellect of the entire country go into the work-shop and teach men to use the tremendous material forces of nature in a scientific manner and with admirable and accurate results. (Applause.)

Why gentlemen, do you realize what tremendous progress scientific education has made in the last fifty years? To-day the line-man who takes care of the telegraph in your street, the man who in his shirt sleeves stands by yonder dynamo and regulates the forces that light this great Exposition, knows more about electricity than Benjamin Franklin did, than Farraday did, than all the Professors in all the Universities of the United States did when this Institution was organized in 1828. (Applause.) The man who stands beside the steam engine, the man who controls those tremendous forces of physics and of steam, the very fireman knows more about steam than Robert Fulton did. Every one of us has to-day as the alphabet, the simple letters in

the alphabet of acquisition, more of scientific development than the college Professors and the master Scientists had fifty years ago. Now whereto does this all tend? Year by year we are making league-long strides, year by year we are taking within our grasp these tremendous forces. Whereto are we going? The workingmen of the world to-day stand on the very top of the scientific acquisition of all the ages that are gone. To what heights are labor and science yet to climb?

This land of ours (and I love to speak of it as you speak of this Institute,) this AMERICAN land of ours with steam plow, with steam sower, with steam reaper, with steam binder, with railroads to carry grain to market, with great elevators to store that grain, with steam-ships of ten thousand tons to bear it across the sea, this American land of ours is furnishing wheat and corn for the civilized world, and wherever famine stalks with gaunt figure and with grimy visage, there American production is ministering to the world's wants. (Applause.)

To-day (and I love that name AMERICAN), to-day the American mine is furnishing silver and gold and copper, and despite of the pessimists, before the twelve months have rolled by, we will be furnishing American tin (applause), that we may supply the needs, the business, the industry, the development of the world. (Applause.)

Now, ladies and gentlemen. No, I will take those words back. Women and men. I like these simple words better, for if anyone is a true, honest woman, if anyone is a true, honest man, such an one is highest in the ranks of humanity (applause), this ripple of my poor voice against the hammer and the moving throng is an unequal struggle, and I must close. The time has come for this people of ours to step to the front and to assert modestly and yet with dignity our American claim for an American policy. (Applause.) Let us develop what our fathers began, when they sowed the seed corn of the American Institute. Thus shall we develop this continent; thus shall we keep the common schools; thus shall we keep our free worship; thus shall we keep our free ballot; thus shall we keep our free manhood, and thus shall we show to the nations of the world that the American freeman, the American workman, the American citizen, can and will step to a height of grandeur and dignity and power, such as the citizens of

old Rome never saw in the palmiest days of Roman story. (Applause.)

Twelve months will soon roll round, and on the anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, the great exhibition will open at Chicago. From every city, from every State, from every Territory of our land, and from every island and from every continent of the world, the productions of the farmer, the productions of the artisan, the productions of the scholar, the productions of the laborer, will be brought into competition, and there may the best thought and the best man win. (Applause.) But you will be disappointed if under the influence of our free institutions and trained in such schools as the American Institute, our people shall not stand in the very fore-front of the achievement of the world. Good-night. (Applause.)



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